

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: PFOR, GR, TU

SUBJECT: FURTHER GREEK REACTION TO HOUSE VOTE ON PARTIAL
LIFTING OF TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO

REF: ATHENS 7584

1. SUMMARY. THE PARTIAL LIFTING OF THE TURKISH ARMS
EMBARGO WAS THE PRINCIPAL STORY IN THE MORNING PRESS OF
OCTOBER 4. ALL NEWSPAPERS CARRY GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION
PARTY STATEMENTS ON THE MATTER. ALTHOUGH THE GOVERNMENT
STATEMENT WAS RELATIVELY MILD, THOSE OF
THE OPPOSITION AND THE REACTION IN THE PRESS GENERALLY
IS HIGHLY CRITICAL. END SUMMARY.

2. THE GREEK GOVERNMENT QUICKLY GOT ON THE RECORD IN
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A STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO "A GOVERNMENT SOURCE" WHICH

READS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE. IT IS SELF-EVIDENT THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT CANNOT BUT EXPRESS SORROW AT THE PASSING OF THE BILL. IN ANY EVENT, THOSE WHO VOTED FOR IT--AND THEY ARE MANY--SUPPORTED IT MAINLY WITH THE ARGUMENT THAT IT WOULD FACILITATE THE FINDING OF A JUST SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS ISSUE. IT IS NATURAL FOR US TO EXPECT THAT THEY WILL AT LEAST WORK TOWARDS THAT DIRECTION. UNQUOTE.

3. THE OPPOSITION REACTED QUICKLY AND QUITE PREDICTABLY. THE CENTER UNION/NEW FORCES PARTY (CU/NF) ISSUED A STATEMENT WHICH SAID THAT PRESIDENT FORD, WHO THE STATEMENT ALLEGED USED EVERY POSSIBLE MEANS TO PRESSURE CONGRESS, SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT THE RESUMPTION OF ARMS ASSISTANCE WILL NOT ONLY PREJUDICE U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS BUT WOULD ALSO STRENGTHEN "THE WELL-KNOWN INTRANSIGENCE OF TURKEY AND MAKE MORE DIFFICULT THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AGREEMENT ON THE CYPRUS ISSUE, WHICH THREATENS PEACE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. AT THE SAME TIME IT WILL DEEPLY WOUND THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND INTERNATIONAL MORALITY."

4. THE OPERATIVE PART OF THE CU/NF STATEMENT INVITES THE GOVERNMENT TO DRAW THE APPROPRIATE CONCLUSIONS FROM HOUSE DECISION TO RESUME AID. CALLING FOR IT TO SHOW A FIRM AND UNWAVERING STAND TOWARDS "OPponents AND FRIENDS ON THE CYPRUS ISSUE" IT ASKS THAT "FIRST PRIORITY" BE GIVEN TO THE NATION'S DEFENSE EFFORT AND THAT AMERICAN AND NATO BASES IN GREECE BE "PLACED UNDER NATIONAL CONTROL". "IF THE PRESENT INACTIVITY CONTINUES", IT ADDS, "THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT HAPPENS WILL BE VERY HEAVY."

5. ANDREAS PAPANDREOU SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF AND FOR HIS PASOK PARTY, STATED THAT THE DECISION OF THE CONGRESS WAS NO SURPRISE BECAUSE "THE IMPERIALISTIC ESTABLISHMENT IS VERY STRONG IN AMERICA." HE SAID THAT "TURKEY, LIKE ISRAEL, IS TODAY AN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INSTRUMENT OF AMERICAN EXPANSION ISSUES WHILE GREECE IS AN UNFENCED VINEYARD." HE CALLED FOR THE GOVERNMENT "TO FOLLOW A GREEK FOREIGN POLICY OR OTHERWISE TO ADMIT ITS NATIONAL BANKRUPTCY. THE ONLY COURSE THAT REMAINS FOR THE GOVERNMENT, "HE MAINTAINED, "IS AN IMMEDIATE AND COMPLETE DEPARTURE FROM NATO AND THE IMMEDIATE EXPULSION OF THE AMERICAN BASES. OTHERWISE THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT ENTITLED TO

REPRESENT THE GREEK PEOPLE."

6. THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE INTERIOR ISSUED A STATEMENT IN WHICH IT ALLEGED THAT THE RENEWAL OF ARMS SHIPMENTS WOULD ENCOURAGE TURKISH INTRANSIGENCE AND PROMOTE US/NATO PLANS TO PARTITION CYPRUS. THE MOSCOW-TIED COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE EXTERIOR HAS YET TO MAKE ANY COMMENTS ON THE HOUSE ARMS ACTION.

7. THE GOVERNMENT REACTED QUICKLY TO WHAT IT CONSIDERED TO BE OPPOSITION ATTEMPTS TO BLAME THE GREEK GOVERNMENT FOR CONGRESS' DECISION. A SPOKESMAN STATED THAT IT IS "ASTONISHING THAT THE OPPOSITION RUSHES TO CRITICIZE THE GOVERNMENT FOR A DECISION TAKEN BY THE AMERICAN CONGRESS. EVEN MORE ASTONISHING IS THE FACT THAT THE OPPOSITION SPEAKS ABOUT GOVERNMENT INACTIVITY WHEN IT IS KNOWN TO ALL THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER PERSONALLY HAVE ENGAGED IN AN UNPRECEDENTED DIPLOMATIC EFFORT, THE RESULTS OF WHICH HAVE BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE GREEK PEOPLE AND INTERNATIONALLY.

7. THE MORNING PRESS IS UNIFORM IN ITS NEGATIVE TREATMENT OF THE SUBJECT, BOTH IN NEWS REPORTS AND EDITORIALS. MOREOVER, SEVERAL PAPERS, WITH ILL-CONCEALED PLEASURE, PROMINENTLY PLACED TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER'S REPORTED STATEMENT THAT "IT IS DIFFICULT TO CHARACTERIZE THE CONGRESSIONAL DECISION AS BEING FULLY SATISFACTORY." SOME OF THE HEADLINES THIS MORNING READ AS FOLLOWS: LIBERAL, OPPOSITION TO VIMA "PANHELLENIC INDIGNATION"; RIGHT-WING ELEFTHEROS COSMOS "CU/NF AND PASOK DEMAND WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO"; PRO-GOVERNMENT, CONSERVATIVE ACROPOLIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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"FORD PROMISES TO GIVE AID TO GREECE--THE TURKS UNMOVEABLE ON THE CYPRUS PROBLEM WHILE AGAIN RECEIVING ARMS"; COMMUNIST INTERIOR AVGHI "FORD-KISSINGER STRENGTHEN TURKISH EXPANSIONISM". KUBISCH

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